

## **Easterling, Deborah**

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**From:** Easterling, Deborah  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2015 1:49 PM  
**To:** 'Geri Dehne'; 'Duke, Daphne'; 'Easterling, Deborah'; 'DeSanty, Tricia'  
**Subject:** RE: DOCKET ND-2015-20-E

Dear Geri and Richard Miller,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your email to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina. Your email will become a part of ND-2015-20-E - Duke Energy Carolinas: Foothills Transmission and Substation Project- 45-Mile Transmission Line Between Asheville, NC, Power Plant and New Substation Near Campobello, SC, and will be posted on our website under this docket.

Please let me know if you should require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Deborah Easterling  
Administrative Coordinator

**From:** Boyd, Jocelyn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2015 10:23 AM  
**To:** Duke, Daphne; Easterling, Deborah; DeSanty, Tricia  
**Subject:** FW: DOCKET ND-2015-20-E

**From:** Geri Dehne [mailto:geri.dehne@psc.sc.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2015 12:09 AM  
**To:** Boyd, Jocelyn  
**Subject:** DOCKET ND-2015-20-E

We wish to comment on the above referenced Docket regarding Duke Energy's Foothills Project.

Please read the attached letter

# THE BUILT-MORE

Geri & Richard Miller & Family

NC 28773

August 24, 2015

via Electronic Transmission:  
[Jocelyn.Boyd@psc.sc.gov](mailto:Jocelyn.Boyd@psc.sc.gov)

Jocelyn Boyd, Chief Clerk  
Office of Regulatory Staff  
Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100  
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: DOCKET ND-2015-20-E

Dear Ms. Boyd:

We wish to comment on the above referenced Docket regarding Duke Energy's Foothills Project.

We feel that Duke has yet to explain the assumptions behind its plans, such as why existing rights of way can't be used, whether Duke's anticipated growth in energy use is really justified, and if so, whether there's a way to do it that would cause less damage to property values and less scarring to our majestic green spaces and ridges.

Duke claims that steady population growth in the region will require it to build a new gas-fired power plant that will generate 650 megawatts of electricity. However, the reality is that U.S. electricity usage peaked in 2007 and has been declining ever since due to both the economy and energy efficiency.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's Annual Energy Outlook report, American energy consumption is expected to grow at a modest rate, averaging

0.3 percent a year through 2040, well within the capacity of Duke's current energy infrastructure. Many experts think even this estimate is too high.

So if all this is true, why the potentially intrusive, disruptive plans to build this new power infrastructure? What Duke isn't saying is that natural gas has become so cheap that converting to it will save Duke billions and benefit its Shareholders.

Where will this natural gas come from? Fracking, of course. Coal is so environmentally damaging to the air and to streams that environmentalists have demanded moving away from it for years. But is fracking any better?

In addition to concerns about groundwater pollution and seismic activity where deep-well injection activity is taking place, recent research by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Earth Systems Research Laboratory found higher than expected levels of methane gas emissions spewing from fracking wells. The leaks at drilling sites coupled with emissions from the burning fossil fuels were as high if not higher than emissions caused by the entire coal extraction to burn process.

Duke's switch to natural gas isn't because it suddenly became a tree hugger. Gas is currently artificially cheap, and so the present economic advantage is wagging the dog. But using fracked gas as a long-term strategy is tenuous at best.

Fracking requires a tremendous amount of capital outlay and drilling because there are far fewer sweet spots in hydraulic fracturing than in conventional drilling, and depletion rates are as high as 85 percent after the first year of drilling. There is a growing number of experts who believe fracking will be financially unfeasible in five years or fewer.

Should Duke be building 45 miles of transmission lines and a new power plant just so shareholders can get a short-term financial gain? What happens when we're all fracked out?

This whole approach seems both shortsighted and against the public good. Shouldn't the public interest, not short-term profits, govern a public utility's plans? If Duke was serious about developing a long-term strategy for our power needs, it would look to natural gas, coal and nuclear power as solely a temporary bridge as it focuses on growing new sources of green, renewable energy that protect the environment and offer residents a source of power that can be counted on for years to come. (The sun won't be running out anytime soon.)

If Duke followed these alternative courses of action, it wouldn't need to build massive power lines but could instead focus on modernizing the grid it already has, making it a "smart grid" that can accommodate new energy technologies and adapt to future needs.

Duke's efforts to pour our hard-earned money into a short-term strategy that has little hope of resolving future energy needs and we ask the Commission to demand that Duke look at these alternatives

On a personal note, should this project go through, it will pass directly over our house, pond, creek, organic orchards and gardens. In our situation, proposed line 7A deviates from the existing tower line for a short time on its own, for a short distance and reconnects back to the existing power line, all the while passing completely through our entire property. We would not be able to live within such close proximity to the high voltage lines due to our extreme sensitivities to EMF.

The toxicity created with the "maintenance" of the line easement property with Round Up & its ill health effects will cause us to write the death sentence for our entire family as well as any future generations who would want to own this TOXIC property.

Another upsetting part of this picture is, should your commission grant Duke the ok, we will also loose our business and our home. Our family has only lived here for 2 years and in this time we have invested our entire savings and energy into the purchase and improvement of this, "our ideal home & business". We have transformed an overgrown, derelict, historic cabin to an inviting, self sustaining, income producing paradise.

In closing, Ms. Boyd we need the Service Commission now as never before to help save the Foothills area, the I-26 gateway both to North and South Carolina as well as our home. Duke Power still needs to give us more answers, and until they properly justify the need and rationality behind this project we hereby ask that you deny them the permission to proceed with this project.

Yours truly,

Geri & Richard Miller